(a) whether the number of incidents of prisoners escaping from jails in the different States in the country including Madhya Pradesh, has gone up;

(b) if so, what is the number of such incidents and number of prisoners who have escaped from jails since 1998 till date, State-wise; and

(c) what steps have been taken by the Central and State Governments for prevention of such incidents and action taken against the guilty persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) "Prisons' being a State subject, specific information about the number of prisoners escaping from jails is not maintained by the Central Government. Prision management, including the prevention of escape of prisoners from jails, is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments. However, the Central Government, on its part, has been extending financial support to the State Governments or strengthening their prison security, etc.

Illegal Weapons Traders in Chambal

†633. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is correct that Chambal region of Madhya Pradesh is becoming the centre of illegal weapons traders;

(b) whether it is also correct that threat being posed to dacoits elimination from rough and rugged terrains of Chambal due to smuggling of illegal weapons; and

(c) if so, what measures have been taken to prevent the operation of serious criminal activities like accumulation of illegal weapons and smuggling alongwith the number of cases which have been registered against these gangs during the last year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Freedom Fighters Pension

634. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.